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From the fanning, from the beating
Of his great brown wings there flow
Warm, sweet airs, that fly and flutter
O'er the limpid waters low,

Where the green and leafy garlands,
Rustling, all the trees adorn,
And across the open meadows,
And the waving ears of corn :

Golden heads together laying,
Hark, they whisper and they hum :
When, oh, when (the corn is saying)
Think you, will the reapers come ?

And the reapers, see, they hasten :
Sickles ring and flash and glisten—
To the sound of merry voices
Once again I stand and listen.

Down the valleys they are singing,
They are singing o'er the plain,
And the old, unconquered sadness
Rises in my heart again.

AUTUMN SONGS.

I.

How wet and gloomy lies the wood,
Of all its flow'rs how stript and shorn !
One scanty handful, see, I bring,
Tho' I have wandered there since morn.

Poor, dwindled things, some dark with frost,
And others drenched and spoilt with showers.
Beside whose grave-stone shall I lay
The last remaining wreath of flowers ?

This little wreath alone have I,
Of pinched and melancholy blooms,
And oh, at ev'ry step I take,
So many, many are the tombs!

For with a hundred snatching hands
Has death made desolate my way . . .
Oh, then, beside whose resting-place
The wreath, the last one, shall I lay?

My song, my melancholy song,
The little wreath of blooms art thou—
Too long I spent upon the road,
Too late, too late, I bring thee now!

2.

My head is bent, my hair is grey already,
Dim-sighted, too, and weary, are mine eyes,
And drop by drop upon my heart is falling
The chilly dew of evening, stolenwise.

The last remaining summer flow'rs have faded,
The last dead leaves have fallen from the tree—
Oh, let me for one moment rest beside thee,
And lay my tired head upon thy knee!

'Tis time, 'tis time that I should cease from toiling!
The way was long, and heavy was my load:
In cold and heat, in tempest and in darkness,
I followed still the never-ending road.

I think my heart is dead, for where aforetime
There sprang and blossomed flowers wild and sweet,
And where the grasses rustled in the sunshine,
Are pebbles now, and thorns, that wound the feet.

And where the waters once ran swift and sparkling,
Lies, bare and dry, the stony river-bed,
My harp is broken, and my song is silent,
My tears are shed.

Ah me, those tears, what time that I was singing,
 How bitter and how hot they used to fall!
 And what, I ask myself, have I accomplished?
 And what has been the ending of it all?

The Jews my brothers, will they understand me?
 And all that stirs within a poet's heart?
 Will *they* believe how deep can be his sadness,
 How burning and incurable the smart?

A Jew has learned to think of other matters,
 Since first from out the mud his head he raised,
 And stood upon his feet, and managed shortly
 To look like other people, God be praised!

From all eternity he had a teacher,
 On Sabbath days the Scripture to explain,
 And as he listened, full of deep contrition
 He sighed and sobbed, his tears fell down like rain.

And then he had a crazy thing, a jester—
 A man of brains, a youth sharpwitted, quick,
 And in his verses he would find refreshment,
 And with his tongue would click.

And then, sometimes, he bought him of a pedlar,
 Or else at fairs, a tale—upon my word,
 It is the very drollest thing that ever
 Was seen or heard!

One reads and laughs, and then a little farther
 One reads, and laughs till one is like to split.
 One laughs, because to that intent and purpose
 The thing was writ!

What then? is Jewish life so very cheerful?
 Contains it then so much at which to smile?
 Are there so many things away from sadness
 The stricken heart one moment to beguile?

And do we then lament so very seldom?

Let's reckon now, and see if we can tell!

We weep throughout the fast-day of Atonement,
The rich and poor, the young and old as well.

We weep o'er Lamentations and Confession,

We weep the daylight and the darkness through,
And are we not to laugh a little ever?

Go, let us be! why, that would never do!

They've laughed in years gone by, and in the future

To laugh they will continue, just so long
As there shall live a Jew—then hush, be silent,
My song, my melancholy song!

“FOR THE SIN OF . . . GRANT US
FORGIVENESS!”

ONCE again, in spirit,
Living o'er my childhood,
On the solemn fast-day
By the wall I stand,
Dressed in snow-white linen,
Hungry, aye, and thirsty,
With the old, the heavy
Prayer-book in my hand.

And with tears and fervour:
“For the sin” repeating,
Missing nothing, from the
First word to the last,
All the while, tho', feeling
Most as I were dreaming,
Most, as I were lying
Bound in slumber fast.